PEACE CORPS

volunteer

MAY 1968

A call for a step-by-step approach toward

An international Peace Corps

By MICHAEL VON SCHENCK

Internationalization of the volunteer movement is a subject which we have in common. You have been talking about it in the Peace Corps, and we have been discussing it in my organization, the International Secretariat for Volunteer Service. We haven't found a definite answer yet. But I would like to explore with you some ideas I have about internationalizing volunteer efforts.

I feel that I have to state some assumptions. The first one is that we are in the same boat—all of us. We are in the same boat not only because of the general purpose of our work, but also as far as one particular problem is concerned—the problem of freedom of expression. A volunteer is a member of an organization *and* he is a human being, an individual. In making any political statements, he is bound by membership in his organization.

The same thing applies to me now. I'm a human being; I have my own ideas. At the same time, I am secretary-general of an international organization. I want to make clear that most of the ideas I am talking about are not the ideas of my organization. I would prefer to speak as "Michael X" and not as secretary-general of ISVS.

Freedom of expression is one of the most direct aspects of the conflict—whether a volunteer is just a part of the national effort or whether he is more than that. Last night I was reading an excellent report on the Peace Corps in Latin America by Seth Tillman, a consultant to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In his report, Tillman says, as far as the Volunteers are concerned, we are now caught in a conflict of the Volunteers having to play the game, on the one hand, and wanting to change that game, on the other hand. On one hand, Volunteers are a part of their organization, and on the other, they want to go beyond the organization. Now, if the organization is a national one, the limits might be more serious than if the organization were an international one. Volunteers, at least the Swiss volunteers I've headed for several years, are often caught in a conflict that, in order to play the game, they have to put some limits on the things they say and do.

The second assumption I am making is that we are all working for the same goal. That goal, as I see it, is based upon the realization that the world is getting smaller and that all nations are becoming neighbors. There seems to be little hope for one nation to live in peace as long as the conditions for living in peace do not exist in all other nations. We have realized in our countries that there is no possible way for peaceful coexistence between a very poor, desperate people and the more well-to-do people. We are beginning to realize that the same situation exists in the world at large. I think we all want this world of ours to become better. This is the basic goal of any volunteer work.

Common goals

However, there are some people, not only Americans, but also among other nations, who consider the work of volunteers to be primarily to improve the image of the volunteer-sending nation, to work primarily for the interest of the sending nation. If this is the case, I think it isn't really worthwhile to consider any degree and amount of internationalization of volunteer efforts. I assume the main purpose of volunteer work is to work for a better world. There is just one world. And, therefore, our goals are common, and we could join our efforts in a common work.

I think these efforts are very important. Development efforts can be achieved only by men and they cannot be achieved by a few men. For real success in development, we need the mobilization of populations-at-large. We need not only thousands of men to do it, but millions of men. There is no help except self-help, and this can be achieved only by people working for themselves. I'm fully convinced that development service, of which the export volunteer is a part, can be an excellent answer to this need—perhaps the only answer.

Assuming that we *do* work for the same purpose, then I think we are right in asking the questions: "Why shouldn't we work together?" "Why shouldn't we join our efforts?" These questions have been asked by many people in the past few months in many places. The Foreign Minister of Japan has raised the issue before the General Assembly of the United Nations. Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) is very interested in this issue. The International Secretariat for Volunteer Service has had meetings recently with representatives of United Nations agencies. International cooperation is also happening among volunteers. Wherever volunteers of different nations are working in the same region, you are normally safe in saying that they work together. But this working together of volunteers now is just a happening, and I think the real question is whether it should be changed into a planning. Should not the volunteer organization catch up with the volunteers and provide for such international cooperation?

By suggesting such international cooperation, we have to consider why we should do it. There are several reasons usually mentioned. The first one is a sort of romantic, idealistic motivation, a belief that things work better by working together and by getting away from the national concept to the international idea. Another

Chilean university students work summers as domestic volunteers. This group takes part in an agriculture project.

A German export volunteer does medical work with mothers and children in a Tanzania clinic.

argument has been that the world at large will need much more international cooperation in the future, that the young generation of volunteers should generate such international cooperation, and that volunteer service can be and should be an example of practical and successful cooperation. Of course, such cooperation will be needed to secure peace in the future. Another argument, a rather practical one, has been that volunteers can be used better through international cooperation. Just the way that commercial people have been fighting for free trade and common market areas in order to better pool their resources, in the same way, some people say, we should pool the resources of national volunteer organizations.

I want to try to clarify myself by giving a small example. Let's assume you have American, Swiss, Swedish and French volunteers working in Dahomey. The Swiss might have an excellent hospital construction project for which they can provide an architect, a mason, and an electrician. But they are not able to find a mechanic. The Swedes, on the other hand, might have a mechanic. So, if the Swiss would use the Swedish volunteer in their own project, they could realize a project which they otherwise could not.

In more general terms, most of you are aware of a certain difference among the volunteers coming from Anglo-Saxon countries and those coming from continental Europe. The Anglo-Saxon volunteers have been characterized in the past as being mainly generalists, whereas the continental European volunteers are mainly specialists. I definitely see a place both for the generalists and the specialists. But, in my opinion, the best idea would be to *combine* the generalists and specialists—generalists being the engine, the stimulating force of the volunteer project—and the specialists being, more or less, the tools for doing the technical, practical work.

In this way the two concepts, generalist and specialist—if they are different—supplement each other in a very happy way. You are not trying to change the attitudes of people just for the sake of changing attitudes. Nor are the Europeans—to the extent that they are part of technical cooperation—trying to improve technical conditions or economic conditions just for the sake of that improvement. You are both working in order to help human beings have a better life and I don't see any fundamental problem in those two concepts working together; on the contrary, I think they will complement each other.

Joining efforts

Another reason for internationalization of volunteer work can be the attempt to escape criticism of national volunteers, because they are, whether or not they want to be, the representatives of one given nation. This argument is valid for several countries, but there is some danger in pointing to this argument too much.

Thus I think that for many reasons it would be worthwhile to join the efforts of national volunteers in the international effort. The next question is how can we do it?

Many people have suggested that there shouldn't be national volunteers anymore; there should be only international volunteers—that the United Nations should recruit, train and supervise United Nations volunteers. I think this is great as an idea, but I see practical difficulties which might make such a solution impossible.

First is the political situation. The U.N., on any matter of major importance, needs a consensus of the major political powers that are represented in the U.N. I do not think the U.N. can decide to have its own volunteers without such a consensus. At this moment, I would be surprised if such a consensus could be achieved. There is at least one major world power that is opposed to the very idea of volunteers, and has been opposed for several years. Now, in that country, the situation might change. Before the U.N. can do anything in the volunteer field, in the way that some people have suggested, a situation has to be created in which we can get a consensus of all major political powers to move in that direction.

Furthermore, I would warn against a super administration on the world level. It would not be very practical if all the volunteers of the world were under one hat, under one direction, in one administration. At the moment, there are about 30,000 export volunteers all over the world from many different countries. In addition to the export volunteers, we have about 75,000 domestic volunteers—VISTA and Job Corps type volunteers. I simply don't see, at this moment, how all these volunteers could be recruited, selected, trained, supervised and cared for by one single world administration. Perhaps it can be done, but it would be a very difficult job.

Show advantages

I do think, however, that we have to go ahead and work for a denationalization of volunteer efforts and for an increasing international effort. But we have to do it step by step, taking into account the realities of the world; and among those realities we have, unfortunately, political realities. We have to do it in a practical way—in a way which convinces the skeptics. There is no success like visible success. We have to do it in small steps and show advantages in order to be able to go all the steps further.

As Michael X, I would say that an excellent way would be to start with joint volunteer projects in the field, using national volunteers. We should not at this moment—and probably not for a long time—get rid of the Peace Corps as such, or the Swiss volunteers. We should put Swiss volunteers and the United States Peace Corps and other volunteers to work jointly in one project. They would remain national volunteers, but they would work in an international project. Such projects should be generated at the resident representative level with the host country representatives, since those are the people who can make practical propositions. On the other hand, at the agency headquarters level, the field people should find encouragement for proposing such a step and executing such action.

As an example of what is happening now, Swiss volunteers in Dahomey are working in community development; in the next village there are French and German volunteers working with the farmers to increase agricultural production. The activities of all are going very well together; even more than that, the community development work is necessary for a permanent success of the increase in agricultural production. And vice versa.

My idea of the first step would be that we do not simply have this cooperation happen, but that we plan it. More and more we know what volunteers will be doing before they get to their countries; let's now plan those activities in relation to the activities of all of the volunteers.

Another move which is quite feasible at this moment is to give to the U.N. and the U.N. agencies more volunteers to work in their projects. These agencies have many international projects, some of which are host government projects sponsored by the U.N. You simply need to assign your volunteers to those agencies. We could later go one step further and have one resident representative for several export organizations in the same country—if the first step, these international projects, proved to be successful. In the future, the U.N. might recruit its own volunteers, or national volunteers could be transferred to the U.N. in such a way that they would become international volunteers.

I have been asked what receiving nations think of the plans for inter-

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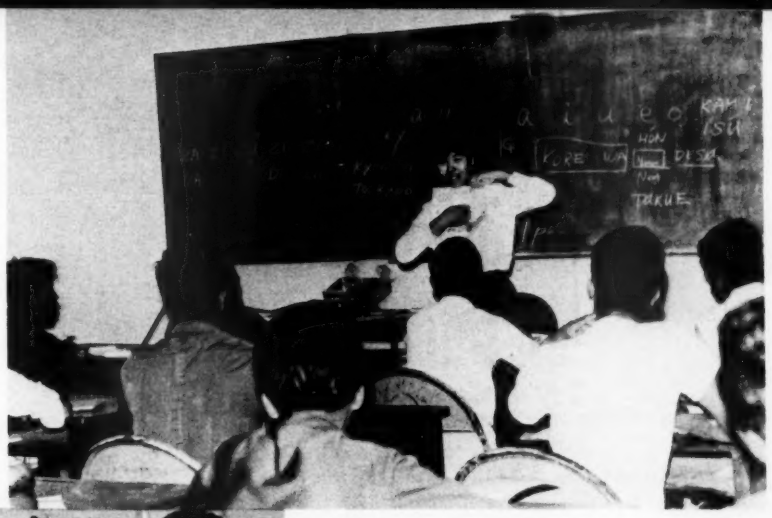
ON THE COVER: At top, a Peruvian tapestry poster for the School Partnership Program, see page 6. Center, Kenya domestic volunteers build houses, see page 2. Bottom left, selection weary trainees, see page 11. Bottom right, Puerto Rico trainees in the field, see page 13.



Japanese export volunteer teaches Japanese in Laos.

Dutch export volunteer shows lathe techniques to Africans.

nationalization of the volunteer movement. I can't give a simple answer. I can only give two contradictions as an answer. One is that the receiving countries often—or sometimes—consider volunteers, because they are a creation of the sending government, to be an instrument of that government. And the receiving countries would definitely prefer to have these volunteers placed, not under the national authority of the sending country, but under an international authority.

On the other hand, some receiving countries say if national volunteers were under a U.N. umbrella, then, because the U.N. is now sacrosanct, they would not be able to criticize those volunteers. You find all sorts of arguments and positions. I don't think it is possible at this moment, at least not for me, to give you a general picture of the situation. But I can say that some countries definitely wouldn't have any objections to volunteers working in projects under U.N. authority, whereas they do have some objections to volunteers working under the national authority of the sending country.

From happening to planning

I'm Swiss you know, and the Swiss have the banking spirit, which means a very skeptical and practical approach. Let's not underestimate the practical difficulties of people from different countries, of different cultures, working together. If we do too much at one time, then the whole thing collapses. We have to do it slowly, step by step, taking into account those difficulties that exist.

On the other hand, for most young people and for most volunteers, it is more than a challenge to work together with young people from other nations. As far as I can judge, volunteers are ready for international cooperation. The volunteer-sending organizations are beginning to get ready for such cooperation. I definitely feel that the world needs international cooperation. It needs more—many more—development efforts. A very practical international cooperation of volunteers will help us in getting this effort to be a success.

We've got to catch up with the volunteers. The sending organizations have to bring the happening to the form of a planning. It is a step forward and it should be done. My organization is working in its own way, in helping the national organizations to achieve this result—to get together, to work together, and to take these steps in the direction that I consider not only right but necessary.

We have to be careful. We shouldn't rush blindly into the right direction, without seeing the obstacles lying in the way. But doing something carefully should never be an excuse for doing nothing or too little or too slowly.

Dr. Michael von Schenck is secretary-general of the International Secretariat for Volunteer Service, an organization of nations which seeks to encourage voluntary service worldwide. Before coming to ISVS, Dr. von Schenck was director of the Swiss Volunteers for Development, which he helped create in 1963. In addition, Dr. von Schenck has held a number of diplomatic posts and has worked in the fields of tourism, commercial navigation, transportation, and journalism. His remarks presented here were adapted from an address he made at the Peace Corps Forum.

A look at the practical problems of

Building schools in partnership

By CHRIS LANGLEY

Is the School Partnership Program a "sacred cow," as one Peace Corps administrator recently called it?

Hardly. But the program, since its inception, has been plagued by a problem in fulfilling all three of its goals. The first goal, and the most important one, is building an adequate school where one was not available. But the SPP cannot be used until, according to the SPP handbook, "the community has reasonably exhausted other possible sources of local, national and international assistance."

The second goal of the program lies in the concept of "self-help" for the village and in general community development, the aspect of SPP work which differentiates it from the Agency for International Development or other give-away programs. Here the handbook comments, "The program should serve as the core around which to provide training and practice in the skills of organization, and to demonstrate the value and powerful potential of self-help efforts."

The final goal is centered on the first "P" of the program's title—partnership. It seems to be at the very heart of the SPP philosophy. It is *partnership* with a school in the United States that makes the SPP unique and relative to Peace Corps idealism.

"Just as important as the building itself is the generation of a growing understanding between the partners, through contact and exchange, as well as the provision of an opportunity for the community to work out their problems together," states the handbook.

The SPP work in Iran has shown that the latter two goals are being inadequately met, and fulfilling the first raises other questions. It seems likely that the same problems are being encountered in many of the other 39 countries where the SPP operates; such problems lie at the very nature of the situation common to all such village projects. One of the most effective ways to minimize these problems is to avoid from the beginning certain attitudes and approaches in carrying out the school building program.

The first goal: building schools. There can be no denying that the SPP gets architecturally beautiful schools built. This alone makes the program significant to world advancement. But an interesting fact has come to light in building schools in Iran. Many villages can afford to build schools, but not the expensive kind required by SPP standards.

A case in point. In Baluchistan, one of the provinces in most need of schools, there were two prospective SPP projects near the town of Khash, the site of Volunteer Jack Madson, who was planning to do SPP work during the summer. As investigations proceeded, it was discovered that Esmailabad could raise $500 while Nusheabad had only $330. School plans were drawn up by Peace Corps engineers in the provincial capital and it became apparent that only the first village had enough money to build schools *acceptable* to SPP standards.

The second village had to be abandoned to its own means, even though the village spirit and enthusiasm seemed more appropriate to the self-help aspects of the SPP work than that of the first village.

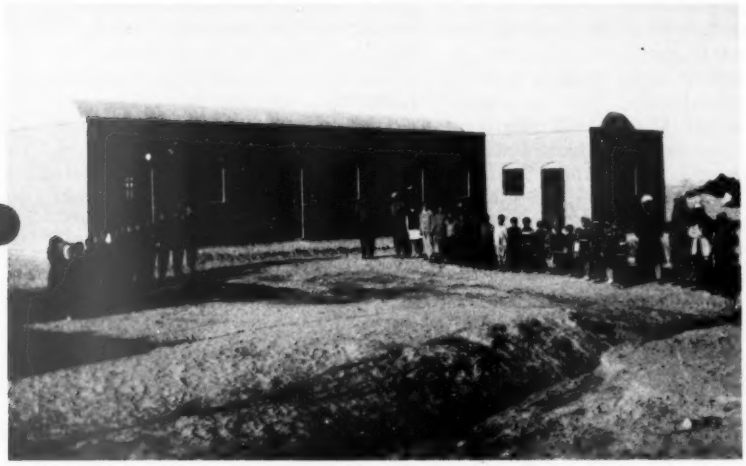
As it turned out, Nusheabad, the second village, had been let down the year before by the Iranian government school building program, but the villagers were determined to have a school. They proceeded, with the farmers doing construction, aided by the women and children carrying the adobe; and a three-room, crude, but completely village-built school was

"Do slick modern buildings have more meaning to the village than the cruder buildings they could build themselves?" In Nusheabad, Iran, these local villagers built this adobe school without SPP money.

the result. The community spirit and the means of construction had been everything one could desire in such self-help projects. At the same time, Esmailabad went ahead with an SPP school and, for reasons discussed below, had paid laborers build the entire school, while they had been capable financially of having the same community experience as Nusheabad.

The question arises, what does "all other possible sources of assistance" mean, and what is its significance here? It appears that requirements of SPP schools limit the villages to only the richest ones. But if villages are capable of building schools without assistance, though of cruder style, isn't it better they do so? As one Volunteer commented, "What really counts is education, not fancy school buildings. I've seen schools in mud huts that seemed to be spreading learning better than the noisy city schools." There is no denying: it is the teacher, not the school, that makes for education. Thus, do slick, modern buildings have more meaning to the villagers and more educational value than the cruder buildings villagers could build themselves?

Volunteer Jack Madson (right) helps plan for the construction of an SPP school with the contractor from town and the heads of the local village.



"Would villages like Esmailabad have built a school without SPP funds? The answer is probably no." The Esmailabad school on opening day.

The SPP in Washington has never spelled out the physical standards that must be met for an SPP school. Glen Fishbach, director of the Peace Corps in Iran, feels it is often the Volunteers themselves who set the exacting requirements of construction. The Peace Corps technical advisor in Tehran seems to spend more time urging Volunteers to keep buildings architecturally simple than rejecting plans which are architecturally too crude. Definitely this area should be explored more fully by SPP headquarters to make the situation clear to the Volunteers. What are the general building standards that Washington adheres to in accepting school proposals?

To be fair, there is one more question to be asked. Would villages like Esmailabad have built a school without SPP funds? The answer is probably no. They had a two-room, overcrowded and under-lit school already, and, without the stimulus of the SPP, they probably would have apathetically carried on without improving these facilities. There can be no denying that the Esmailabad school has provided encouragement and challenge to Nusheabad and the other villages in the area to build schools of their own. In this sense, the project was a definite catalyst to new community plans.

The second goal

To fully understand the problems the SPP encounters in trying to fulfill its second goal, that of community development, one must first consider what CD work entails. A commonly-held concept of CD work might be defined as "working with a group of people and helping them to discover their unfelt needs and to organize themselves to do something about their needs." This is perhaps an oversimplification but it serves our purposes.

How are SPP projects selected? The villages are usually investigated by a Volunteer in the area first. Many times he is accompanied by an education chief or some other official and the fact that up to $1,000 is available for a school becomes known to the village early in the discussion. They

"discover" a need for a school. But who wouldn't want to take advantage of a $1,000 gift? This is hardly making the villagers aware of their unfelt needs. The fact that the villagers must contribute a significant amount of money does tend in a small way to counteract this situation, but it appears they give more to get the money than in reaction to their felt needs. In his report on the SPP school built in Esmailabad, Jack Madson wrote, "The thought of a school materialistically went over big! 'A bright, shiny, new school building that my children will be able to go to and learn.' But for them to actually comprehend the importance of this knowledge is impossible."

Thus, the meaning of the school to the villagers may be, first of all, a showpiece for the village and, second, an educational institution. Obviously, the responsibility for making the SPP elicit the latter response from the villagers is, from the beginning, the Volunteer's. Helping the farmers to discover their unfelt needs is a much more complex business than it may appear on the surface.

A side effect to an incorrect approach to village selection which developed among the Volunteers in Iran was the idea that the SPP was a "building contest." Though Edward White, deputy director of the Peace Corps in Iran and head of the SPP here, stressed that, "The measure of the significance of the SPP here lies not in the number of schools built," the program was still criticized by Volunteers as being "numbers oriented." Perhaps it is time we did de-emphasize numbers and tried to improve on the quality of the SPP projects in progress.

A final aspect of community development in Iran SPP projects centers on the lack of technical skills among the villagers. It was hoped that certain technical innovations could be introduced in the blueprints of the schools. This proved impossible, in most cases, because of the limitations of finances and skills. Most Iranian villagers do not have the skills needed to build a school that meets SPP requirements. This means that the majority of SPP projects in Iran have paid skilled labor, though always paid by the village according to SPP requirements.

In Esmailabad, the villagers not only lacked the skills to build anything other than crude adobe structures, but they said, "We only number 16 farmers; we must work in the fields harvesting the summer crops." Jack Madson explained, "Certainly something very personal is lost in CD work when the self-help gap is filled by the villagers' willingness to give up money. Can the village see this work as a step towards the future? Is it possible for a community of this type to pay for development with money and sit back and feel the worth of what is happening?" Interesting questions, but the answers lie in the future. Ed White responds positively: "If the village has raised additional money from its own resources to pay for such labor, it seems unnecessarily puristic to insist this is not self-help. There is no question that the SPP cannot, overnight, change the nature of village society in Iran or any other country."

Part-time CD

In most cases in Iran, the Volunteer does not live in the village during school construction. There are many reasons for this, the main one being that the Volunteer is usually assigned to a major job in a town or city and only does SPP work as a secondary occupation. But he does live near the village and tries to be present as much as possible during the crucial periods. White admits, "Our experience bears this out, it is very difficult—though perhaps not impossible—to be a 'part-time' CD Volunteer."

In the case of the Esmailabad school, Madson was faced with the problem of working with a weak village chief. Organization was hampered by a dichotomy of ethnic groups. Madson was present in the village most days during the planning and construction of the school, but finally he had to rely on an outside force to get the money collected. This force was in the form of an agriculture extension agent for the area, Madson's Iranian counterpart.

"Though not necessarily a discredit to the SPP by any means, perhaps right there we can see some of the difficulty in communicating the idealism of the SPP. Of these 16 farmers, none could grasp it; only the educated co-worker, who knew the importance of education, and who had

become a symbol of progress to these farmers in three years of work with them, was able to finally provide the leadership to make the SPP possible," said Madson.

But White emphasizes there is no reason to subscribe to too narrow a definition of community development. He states emphatically, "The administrative experience gained in working with a Peace Corps Volunteer on an SPP project is a profound and practical exercise in community development for a receiving village." He continues, "The SPP extends our contact with Iran and its people to a level at which we have been very little involved in the past: the village. Perhaps, in the long run, it will help us to develop the techniques and knowledge required to permit the mounting of a real village-level community development program." Madson adds that, at least in the case of Esmailabad, the SPP did point out to the villagers the need of a strong village chief for the welfare of the community.

Beyond the obvious financial resources the partnership between U.S. school and host country school makes possible, what else does the SPP offer? The SPP handbook stresses the importance of communication between the village and the sponsoring high school and the international understanding generated in this way. But, apparently, it is in this realm that the School Partnership Program is most lacking. White acknowledges that "a number of SPP projects are failing to achieve the benefits of the cross-cultural experience which is built into the program." Why is this?

Communications gap

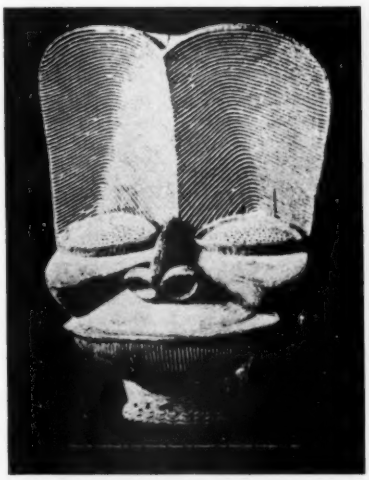
First, there is the sheer logistics problem—the distance separating the two parties of the partnership. Then there is the vast cultural difference. It appears that, initially, it is up to the Volunteer to act as the medium for any communication attempted. During the actual building of the school, this many times drops in importance in the eyes of the Volunteer, who is busy just trying to get the school built. But equally important in any communication is the desire and effort made by each of the two partners to communicate.

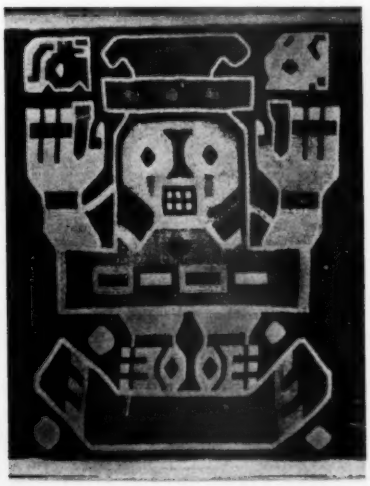
During the entire time of the Esmailabad project, Madson never heard from the sponsoring school. One of the problems was, of course, the fact that the high school was having a summer vacation. Sponsor silence does not seem to be an uncommon problem though. Madson comments on the problem of communication at length in his report:

"The idealism expressed to the people in the States is that we have all these thousands of people all over the world, desiring more than anything else to build a school, and they don't have the funds to do it. Please help them! This is fine, and in many cases true, but a more healthy attitude would be, first of all, to realize that people in foreign countries who are receiving some type of financial aid have a very impersonal feeling about it. Money, to begin with, is impersonal, and bridging the cultural gap a necessity; too often the donator seems to feel that blunt act of giving has overcome these difficulties. Actually, it is only the beginning. How does John Jones High School go about communicating with 16 illiterate Iranian farmers?"

A recent SPP questionnaire asked if Volunteers thought it realistic to expect the host country nationals to participate in correspondence, over a

Posters depicting the art work *of ancient cultures were designed by Peace Corps Art Director Paul Reed to advertise the School Partnership Program. The posters represent the four world regions in which Volunteers work. From left: an Oceanic tapa mask depicts island cultures in the Pacific; from the Near East is a stone carving of the Indian elephant god of wisdom, Ganesa, dating back to the twelfth century; from Africa, a ceremonial wooden mask of the people of Cameroon's high grasslands; and from Latin America, a ceremonial tapestry, thousands of years old, from the Peruvian desert. The posters bear the words: "Discover the World Through the Peace Corps School Partnership Program." They will be distributed to primary and secondary schools and colleges participating in the program.*





period of time. Realistic or not, it seems to constitute a major part of SPP philosophy.

To communicate with the American school, in the case of Esmailabad, a detailed report was prepared, movies and photographs taken of construction, and finally, and probably most effective, Madson visited the sponsoring school on his return to the United States. The Iranian teacher, the only literate adult and only a part-time resident of Esmailabad, was hesitant to write a personal letter to an institution. Recently one of the Esmailabad villagers astutely observed, "How can we who have lived in this one place all our lives ever understand why the rich Americans gave us that money?" For them the local Volunteer, "Mister Jack," built the school.

White summed up the problem: "This backward linkage to the U.S. is not spontaneous and it would be too much to expect that it would be. It requires effort and patience on the part of the Peace Corps Volunteer to see that it is developed. The techniques that have been used are many: posters, pictures, slide shows, films, scrapbooks, encouraging individual pen pal relationships, etc. The point is not so much the actual techniques used to create the cross-cultural interest and sustain it, but rather that the effort be made. Certainly, we want to avoid the slick or propagandistic, or spending a lot of money."

One attempt to encourage the cross-cultural experience has been a plan to link a geographic area in the United States with a specific foreign country, in this case Iran and Illinois. A number of Peace Corps staff members, including several former Volunteers in Iran, engaged in a special campaign in Illinois to publicize the program and raise funds for construction in Iran. So far, seven Illinois schools are involved in SPP work in Iran. But it is difficult to see the real value of this to the individual village-sponsor relationship. The real problem seems to be in acquainting the village with the sponsor. An effort is made to do this, according to SPP headquarters, by matching Volunteers with sponsor schools from the same geographic area. The effects of this activity have yet to be measured, but it would seem they could have potential if carried out to a significant degree.

A secondary project

This report would be incomplete without considering briefly what an SPP project means to the individual Volunteers involved. It is here that results point consistently in a positive direction. In Iran, no Volunteer is assigned to an area only to work in the SPP. School building is meant to be in addition to his assigned work, which is his real reason for operating in the area. So far, there have been teaching English as a foreign language, agricultural extension and rural public works Volunteers working in the SPP. The work tends to fill lax periods of time, especially during the hot summer months when the Volunteer would be otherwise without work. It gives many Volunteers a chance to show rewarding, tangible results of their Peace Corps service. It also gives them a way to interact with the villagers of the country, in most cases a majority of the population. As a result, the Volunteer comes to understand the culture of his country better and to improve his language facility. SPP work seems to be in most ways a broadening experience for the Volunteer and, at the same time, a morale booster. In fact, one Volunteer in Iran who has completed his service said that the SPP school that was finally completed after six solid months of effort on his part and that of the villagers represented the single most significant experience of his entire life.

There are still problems in almost every aspect of the so-called "sacred cow." The inadequacies, though, do not by any means invalidate the SPP and its philosophy. They do mean that every Volunteer and staff member connected with the program must be constantly striving to keep these inadequacies at a minimum.

Chris Langley has taught English in Iran for almost two years. A correspondent for THE VOLUNTEER, *he graduated from Dartmouth College where he was editor of the daily newspaper.*

"Most Iranian villagers do not have the skills needed to build a school that meets SPP requirements."

Editor's note: School Partnership Program headquarters reports that it does not issue uniform construction standards for schools. The quality of school construction is determined by a host country agency or by the Volunteer working on the project. The SPP requests only that the project fit into the country's development plans, and that construction plans are realistic in terms of available resources and cost of materials. While communities are encouraged to provide at least 25 per cent of the total cost of the project, those which are unable to raise the cash or material equivalent of 25 per cent are not eliminated from consideration for the program. In these cases, says the SPP, Volunteers and staff judge whether the community is contributing as much as is reasonable.

By DONOVAN McCLURE

Volunteers and staff in Turkey propose a basic turn-around of Peace Corps training programs this summer. We recommend that:

- Everyone be sworn in as Volunteers on the first day of the training program, and
- "Selection," as such, and selection boards be done away with.

These recommendations are based on an extensive study done this past fall and winter by Volunteer task forces and by Peace Corps Turkey staff studies and discussions.

There should be nothing insurmountable administratively about these proposals. It should be as easy to separate a Volunteer from the Peace Corps while in training as it is to separate a trainee in training.

Underlying all this is an urgent need to treat the Peace Corps Volunteer, from his very first encounter with the Peace Corps, as an adult. You don't *train* to be a Volunteer. You volunteer. You *participate* in a training program to prepare you for the job you volunteered for. *Participate* is the key word.

We all agree that the initial impression Volunteers have of the Peace Corps is a crucial one. They arrive at the training site with little or no idea of what the Peace Corps, as an organization, is like, but they are favorably inclined toward it, otherwise they wouldn't be there. Also, we know that this campus generation is suspicious and *not* favorably inclined toward Big Government, the bureaucracy, the Establishment. They are hoping the Peace Corps will be "different," but they fear it might not be, and have their antennae out for any signs of being mere numbers, or manipulated by The System, or a system.

It has been our experience with Volunteers in Turkey over the past couple of years—and I think this is not isolated—that the Volunteers' first encounter with the Peace Corps, at the training site, generally turns on a hostility that dampens their Peace Corps enthusiasm and clouds staff-Volunteer relationships for the next two years.

What happens that first week? The first thing that happens is the label "trainee" is pinned on each chest. That's not very inspiring. They thought they had joined the Peace Corps, not an officer training program like OCS to see if they could qualify for gold bars on their shoulders.

"Let's look at the person who comes to Peace Corps training. He comes because he has a vision. It is this vision that is the Peace Corps' ideology, and its hope. This, beyond technical training, is what the Peace Corps offers the world; and it is this enthusiasm which enables the Volunteers to accept new experiences and 'cross cultures.' In this light, everything that might happen in a training program that discourages or stunts this potential is a disservice to the individual, the persons he will work with and to the Peace Corps. Yet we are faced throughout with a negative reaction of various degrees to Peace Corps selection and the way it is presented. The reaction to individuals, often those functioning at the planning level, indicates that their involvement in selection interferes with the learning process; it affects the 'manner of presentation.' This sets the tone of the program. Just as manner of presentation affects the cross-cultural studies presentation, this situation intrudes on the effectiveness of the whole program. It can produce dissatisfaction. It may well produce a trainee who therefore learns less, rejects certain things in training, stops listening to certain people and is less effective overseas."

—excerpts from a report on training prepared by Volunteer task forces in Turkey

Then some well-intentioned clod stands before them and makes a few jokes about selection—"take a look around, guys and gals, because some of you won't be here when it comes time to go to Turkey! Cackle, snort." On the faces of the trainees a new look appears. What's this selection jazz? Word soon circulates through the trainee grapevine just what this selection jazz is—and the role-playing commences. Be anything but yourself, advises the grapevine. The only way to get through training is to keep your mouth shut, smile a lot and look like a friend of man. Above all, don't trust anybody on the staff—what you say over three beers to a returned Peace Corps Volunteer will be thrown back to you at your next interview with the psychiatrist. Perfectly solid individuals, the great bulk of every training group, who should be totally concerned with learning about Turkey and Turkish, proceed distractedly through training with clammy palms and churning stomachs, fretting about selection.

By swearing them in as Volunteers at the beginning, we do several things. For one, there's pride in that label—Volunteer—for new recruits. For another, the training staff may be forced to divorce itself from the notion they are dealing with college kids; they may have to stretch a bit, permit the Volunteers to participate in a sharing, learning experience.

No selection boards? As such, they aren't necessary. You have the same machinery present that you always do, with the same staff people involved—the psychiatrists for counseling, the TEFL instructors, the cross-cultural people, the language instructors. And, as the program moves along, they'll tell anybody who isn't making it that he isn't making it, and why. When the country director or desk officer makes his visit, he'll ask the project director how the group is doing. And the project director will say great, except for three or four we aren't sure of and who probably shouldn't go to Turkey. So the director or desk officer will then ask to see these people, and will lend his judgment as to whether the stateside Volunteer should be sent overseas or not.

First impression

In that opening session, at the beginning of training, the project director or someone from Washington, should say something like this: "We're glad you're here. We assume that you're all going to Turkey. During the next three months, you're going to learn a lot more about the job and the country and some of you may decide this isn't for you, that it isn't what you had in mind. If this happens to be the case, then you can resign at any time. This is a volunteer program. If we didn't think all of you could do the job, you wouldn't be here. Some of you may have difficulties that will cause some of us to think you'll have trouble doing the job in Turkey—if that's the case, we'll talk it over with you. The training program itself is concentrated—we'll be throwing an awful lot of information at you in a brief period of time, but we think it's important you get this before you go overseas. The training program represents the best thinking of Volunteers and staff who have served, or are serving, in Turkey, and what they feel, from their experiences, will be most helpful to you. As the program goes along, you may question parts of it, or you many want to revise the

whole thing. Say so. We'll talk about it and see if adjustments are necessary. You'll see that over half the program is language. And that's because Volunteers are unanimous that nothing is more crucial to their success in Turkey than the language . . ." and so on.

This is an adult approach to Volunteers, giving a rationale for the heavy schedule, yet leaving room for adjustments that can be made as the program progresses.

I'm sure we're doing much of this now in many of our training programs, but I feel the basic distorted relationship of officer-to-enlisted man or college dean-to-aspiring junior must first be overcome, as must the whole selection trauma syndrome.

I dare say that no Peace Corps country is more concerned about receiving properly *selected* Volunteers—that is, those who are qualified to and want to be here—than is Turkey. But we feel that these proposals will give us that kind of a Volunteer, only with more heart and enthusiasm and fewer hang-ups than the present system provides.

Donovan McClure, until recently Peace Corps director in Turkey, has returned to his native West Virginia as an associate to Jay Rockefeller working in public relations. His article, "An 'oasis in the wasteland,'" appeared in the January issue of THE VOLUNTEER.

On campus, at camp, or in the campo, *the Peace Corps needs*

A new purpose in training

By GEORGE E. POWERS

Field training in Puerto Rico is a poor substitute for in-country training, but it's generally better than American college campus oriented programs.

A year ago this statement would have exploded into a blast of controversy from Albuquerque to Tanzania; in 1967, the news was still the move from campus to camp. It was emphasized by the opening of two new in-house training centers, the camp for Latin America trainees in Escondido, California and the Leland, Louisiana camp for Africa trainees. These were the fourth and fifth training camps established by the Peace Corps.

However, from campus to camp has been only a transitional phase for Peace Corps training ideologists. Now it is time to leave camp for the *campo*. But a warning must be sounded for the in-country training enthusiasts. In-country training in itself is not enough. Other changes must also take place, changes above all in the purpose of training, and as necessary consequences, changes in techniques and in the attitudes of staff and trainees alike. Without these changes, in-country training will lead to a dead-end street.

It doesn't seem very worthwhile to discuss the ideological demise of campus training. Of course there have been good programs on campus. But the fact is that better sites are available off campus: Escondido, the Virgin Islands, Mexico, even Puerto Rico. The advantages of camp training in rugged environments, which often simulate the disadvantages of undeveloped (by North American standards) cultures, can give the trainees a sense of realism in training and a superficial kind of relevancy which involves more than the inconveniences of outdoor toilet facilities. The language factor, for example, is a primary consideration. Spanish-speaking populations are available at

Photos by Donald Livingston

"Training should be what its name purports: the practice of skills for proficiency." Puerto Rico camp training stresses a four-week field trip to provide trainees the opportunity to practice skills.

our borders as well as in our inner cities. Camp sites near these centers of language dominance are providing trainees with first hand language practice, something that cannot usually be substituted for, especially in a campus language lab. But the question now being asked, the *new* question is: Why use the camps when you can have in-country training?

Last summer the Peace Corps conducted an in-country training experiment in Micronesia. From the report on the project, written by former Peace Corps Training Director Alex Shakow, the evidence was what might have been expected: negative as well as positive. It's always easier to write about the negative, such as Shakow's first point: "Local Peace Corps staff should not be expected to carry out major administrative and training responsibilities simultaneously."

On-campus hang-ups

On the positive side, he wrote: "The key advantage of in-country training is the setting and, as far as possible, training design should be adapted to exploit local opportunities." It seems that many of the problems with the Micronesia training were what Shakow called "remnants of the old order," probably referring to the on-campus type hang-ups, such as the need to mind-feed cross-cultural studies. He says—as did the proponents of camp training earlier—"Trainees find more satisfaction as they move away from the rigid academic approach and take part in practical work from which experimental learning can take place." It seems that the Micronesia experiment did prove one thing about in-country training: in itself it is not enough.

When a camp training director receives the training document from the in-country staff, he is usually overwhelmed by the burden of trying to put all the required subject matter into the few possible hours of a trainee's day. With the increased use of training staff in country, such a document will undoubtedly become more realistic. But, unless the purpose of training is not also made more realistic in the minds of those who plan and actualize these programs, the benefits of in-country training will never be fully realized.

The process of transforming "trainee" into "Volunteer" is more like the professional technique of supervised teacher training, or even better, like the field practice of schools of social work. Training should be what its name purports: *the practice of skills for proficiency,* the most necessary basic being that of communication through interpersonal-intrapersonal dynamics. But mainly it is *the doing* that is the thing of training. Or should be. Only when in-country training programs accept this kind of purpose can they expect to exceed the expectations of camp or campus training. In fact, it seems that all training programs should revolve around such a purpose. It happened in Puerto Rico last winter.

At Camp Crozier, a plan was devised so that the two months of language and technical study could be tested during a four-week period in the *barrios* of Puerto Rico. The whole training program was built around the field trip. The content and methodology of community development were minimized so that they could be related experientially to the realities of the field experience. In fact, the community development part of the program was identified as "field training," the classes as "field training groups," and the instructors as "field training supervisors." Six center towns were chosen as meeting places for the trainees during their field trip. The trainees lived with Puerto Rican families in communities accessible to the center towns. They worked with center town agencies, such as co-ops or agricultural extension groups. They attended meetings in their communities; many of them began to be identified as people who belonged there, not merely as *gringo* house guests. Community leaders were asked to attend the Peace Corps meetings and to give the trainees useful information for effective work in their communities. Another important aspect of this field trip was the close association formed with other service volunteers called VESPRA, Volunteers in Service of Puerto Rico. Some of the Peace Corps trainees lived in the homes of VESPRA volunteers; others worked with them in their community projects. Such was a field experience designed to be *practice.*

In the training manual, the community development aim was defined as "the stimulation of people to perform social actions for need-changes." During preliminary discussions, it was suggested that the success of Peace Corps Volunteers should be measured more by their ability to relate effectively to people than by their use of acquired skills, more by the people's increasing awareness and concern than by the evident signs of change in the physical environment, more by the people's incipient capacity for self-reliance and ability to express self-determination than by their dependency on other individuals or agencies. Such was the purpose of field training in Puerto Rico.

When the trainees returned to camp, it was evident that the field experience had been everything that it was supposed to be. From the results of a questionnaire answered by the trainees, it was found that the negative feelings about training had been for the most part outweighed by positive approval. Everything that had happened in camp prior to field training had been in reality a preparation for the greater happening in the *campo.*

Value of field training

Last year, a more scientifically reliable survey was conducted for an El Salvador training group. The highest number of positive statements, 88 per cent, was made about the field trips, such statements as "valuable for self-evaluation" and "the most valuable part of training." Having worked as community development coordinator two years ago for a Brazil training group in Washington, D. C., I could see the relevancy of field training even in Washington, where cultural shock is frequently more shattering than in most places in Latin America. In Puerto Rico, the relevancy of the field was far greater. And for the same reasons, it can be supposed (although not yet from any observable evidence, since the Micronesia experiment in itself has not been enough) that in-country training will be more relevant still.

Yet, with all these "relevancies," the need for basic training changes exists. The site of training is not the only issue, or the most important one. The thing that matters most is the change taking place within the trainee himself, his *attitudinal change* about

"The thing that matters most is the change taking place within the trainee himself, his attitudinal change." Sensitivity techniques, says Powers, should be a part of all training.

himself, about his relationships to staff and to other trainees, and above all to the people in the field. If this change does not take place during training, then the future Volunteer always will be handicapped in his attempted fulfillment of the essential functions required of him. It's bringing about this attitudinal change that must become the primary concern of program trainers. And their methodology should be adjusted accordingly.

There are many ways to bring about attitudinal change, both formally and informally. And there is no doubt that without directly trying to effect this change, Peace Corps training programs have frequently succeeded despite themselves. However, it must be admitted that the direct and formal methods of achieving this change are, despite all fears and doubts to the contrary, the best methods after all. Professional attitudinal changers can usually prove their worth in the eminently practical way—by changing attitudes.

Sensitivity training is a specific methodology in the field of social psychology, developed and maintained by the National Training Laboratories, Inc. and other groups. It includes a number of group exercises, in the laboratory setting, through which an attempt is made to develop an awareness of group processes, group dynamics, and one's personal reactions and habitual ways of behaving with others. Variations of sensitivity training have been conducted in a number of Peace Corps training programs. This, also, happened at Crozier.

The camp was fortunate to have had a trainer-in-residence, actually a trainer who had worked with drug addict groups in California. With the help of his wife, who had also been exposed to sensitivity training techniques, the trainees were introduced to direct interpersonal confrontation in small-group meetings.

Approach to sensitivity

When one group of trainees left camp for their second field trip, many of them requested a two-day program of group dynamics during their last week in camp. With the cooperation of the Foundation of Community Development Institute in Cayey, Puerto Rico, three sensitivity trainers (they prefer to think of themselves as "agents of attitudinal change") were employed to spend two days with the trainees in camp. Not all of the trainees had expected this approach to group dynamics, but they did agree to participate. The schedule for the two days was set up for ten hours the first day and six the second. Although the trainees were cautious at the first session, a few even resistant, by the evening of the first day they had become so alive with their own reactions to the interpersonal discussion that they did not want to end the session. In each of the three groups, the trainers stopped the meetings over the protests of the trainees, after 11-12 hours of meetings in one day. The next morning every trainee was with his group on time (an unusual camp phenomenon); one group did not want to stop for lunch; no group was ready to stop at the end of the day.

They were asked later to give their opinions about the two days. And their statements were exceptionally positive: "There was not enough time." "It should be more often." "We should have sensitivity training sooner in the

training program." "Sensitivity should be related to other parts of the program." "It should be continued in country." "It should be the basis of the whole training program." There was not a dissenting voice (again an unusual phenomenon) about the value of the sessions. Without doubt, nothing in the program, not even the field trip, "turned on" these trainees as much as their two days of sensitivity training.

The trainers from Cayey were somewhat surprised by the enthusiastic response of the trainees, especially at the end of a three-month training program. But they felt that the trainees had needed something of this kind during training and were more than ready for changes effected through sensitivity techniques. They, therefore, suggested that every training program should begin with a two-day session, similar to the one used here. They also thought that trainees should meet once a week in two to three-hour sessions with trainers' aides, and that a two-day program should be given at the end of training.

Since the Crozier trainees had already been prepared for sensitivity training by the two trainers earlier in the camp program, this kind of sensitivity schedule was more or less followed. It is to be hoped that such a schedule will be more formally adopted in the future.

The whole question of Peace Corps sensitivity training needs thorough and open discussion. It seems that in Peace Corps Washington two minority-opinion groups have taken definite positions, for or against sensitivity training, but that the majority favors a "wait and see" attitude. To bolster the "pro position," I would like to cite but one aspect of Peace Corps sensitivity training—its relevance to self-selection. If the Peace Corps is going to make good its boast that self-selection is *in* and deselection *out*, then techniques must be devised as environmental conditioners for making self-selection possible. Sensitivity training is such a technique.

In a paper presented at the Seventy-fifth Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association last fall, Dr. Samuel Culbert outlined the formally observed results of a sensitivity laboratory at UCLA in a classroom situation:

"From students being more in touch with the full range of their emotions, in a non-evaluative atmosphere, it is expected that they will experience the outer boundaries of their involvements with others, as well as the world in general, and take responsibility for these involvements. Students who experience their current involvements more fully enhance their own self concepts based on feelings of personal mastery and increased self-awareness. Moreover, these feelings seem to serve as driving forces toward increasing the breadth of interests to which the students are willing to commit themselves. Thus it is that sensitivity training for UCLA students is a process which releases human potential."

Testing experiences

It's not a question of simply saying "What's good enough for UCLA is good enough for Peace Corps training," but of taking the facts presented and testing them for validity against other facts, observed in Peace Corps training groups. The fear to try something new (admitting, of course, minimal risks) should be somewhat overcome by the observations of such training specialists as Dr. Culbert and of many other non-specialists, such as the trainees at Crozier. "Motivation" and "commitment" are the key words in the vocabulary of self-selection. It is important that these terms arise from the experiential needs of trainees for self-awareness and not simply be bandied about as emotionally overcharged words heard during a mid-board feedback session with the Field Assessment Officer.

The most frequently reported complaint of trainees is a lack of time during their content-packed days: "No time even to think." Often trainees are swept along with the hyperactivity, without seriously questioning what they are doing in training. In a camp situation, where loyalities come easily and staff personnel is generally non-threatening, self-selection is unrealistic, especially with a war going on in Vietnam. I worked with one program in which two of 44 trainees left training before mid-boards and four after mid-boards, but, at the end of training during an in-country field experience, 13 others left. It was not a matter of their inability to face the real situation of the country where they were expected to work as Volunteers, but rather a question of their not having been able to make the necessary decision earlier in training. Camp life had shielded them from such a decision need. Sensitivity training, or something like it, would have brought the responsibility for self-selection to the surface sooner and more effectively.

During the last Crozier program, a sensitivity group was shocked by the unexpected announcement of a trainee that he was leaving the program. In an almost dramatic flourish of excitement, he stood up at a meeting and cried out, "I don't belong here. I belong in a seminary. And that's where I'm going." He was the kind of trainee who would easily have been selected; he was intelligent, sincere, hard-working, friendly. Perhaps he would have stayed as a Volunteer—and all the while not sure of his commitment—if it had not been for *something like* sensitivity training. Such examples can be cited by many other training groups, even those without sensitivity training, but usually there has been some kind of catalytic agent—an individual or a group—that made a genuine decision possible. My position is that sensitivity training is one of the best techniques available for Peace Corps self-selection, so why not use it? By its results you can judge it. But pre-judgment is illogical.

The value of the Crozier experience with its emphasis on field practice and with its use of specialized attitudinal change techniques, such as sensitivity training, can be evidenced in other Peace Corps training programs—on campus, in camp, but more especially in country. Such an experience indicates better things to come in Peace Corps training. With an emphasized "change concern" of training staffs and with their awakening interest in the practice of individualized social skills, the Peace Corps can expect to mature by actually changing into the image of its trainee-transformed-Volunteers.

George E. Powers has been a field assessment officer and a community development coordinator for a number of Peace Corps training programs. He is presently community development coordinator at Camp Crozier, Puerto Rico.

To Rep, with love

Peace Corps Director
Peace Corps Office
P.O. Box 6901
Telephone 33101
Capital City, Host Country

Dear Sir:

How are you? For myself I am very well. I am 25 years of age. My job is Peace Corps Volunteer gardener. I began my job in the year 1964. I service with truly. I have been in your service for a period of three years; now I want uniform cloth like a company. Please send coat and trousers in a year on time for me, and it must have on the back of coat which is say "Peace Corps gardener." When one Peace Corps person sees the word, they can know me quickly that I am a Peace Corps gardener. And then any Peace Corps will ask me to take them to Peace Corps house.

Should my request meet with your approval, I promise to do all I can to give you satisfaction.

Your obedient servant,
S. K.
Peace Corps Gardener

Peace Corps Office
The Director
P.O. Box 6901
Telephone 33101
Capital City, Host Country

Dear Sir:

How are you? For myself I am well. I received your letter which you sent it on April 25, 1967. But I am going to tell you same thing for you. That is about the house. It doesn't matter for me. But, if you build the house it is good for you. Because when you return to your home the people and the Peace Corps will remember you when they see the house. And they will say this house is built at the time of that Director. So if you want to build you can build. If you don't want you can leave it.

Your respectfully,
S. K.
Peace Corps Gardener

Mr. John Doe
Mr. Tom Smith
Peace Corps Volunteers
Capital City, Host Country

Dear John and Tom:

I have a new assignment for you, one that I consider of critical importance. It would save me a great deal of time if you would talk to S.K. I have tried to raise money for his Peace Corps uniform around the office with no success. If you don't cool him out, I am going to write him a letter telling him that you two guys have been secretly arranging a scholarship to the States for him and that he shouldn't let you out of his sight.

Cordially,
Peace Corps Director
Peace Corps Office

Editor's note: The above correspondence is real. Names and places have been altered to protect the gardener—and his employers.

Director
Peace Corps Office
Capital City, Host Country

Dear Sir:

How are you? Are you well? I hope you are well because my family is well. For myself I am very well also. Well, as you know from previous correspondence I am 25 years of age, and I am a Peace Corps gardener. But I will not always be a Peace Corps gardener. Soon I will go to America on scholarship. Since I am poor on a poor scholarship. I will go to a poor university—M.I.T.

Those two great Peace Corps Volunteers—Mr. Doe and Mr. Smith—tell me it is the university for me. They say you go to that place so I know it is the place for me. Also that is the only place that believe you recommend me for scholarship. That is good for you—and for me. Everything is good except my clothes. Since I go to America, I will need my Peace Corps Gardener uniform for the plane trip. Because I will now go to M.I.T. I must dress like a poison ivy leaguer. Thus my PEACE CORPS GARDENER uniform must have button down collar. Also I must have hat with button—it will read "Peace Corps director is a good." I will see you at Christmas when I pick up my uniform. Also myself and family (three wives, six child) will stay at your house until my ticket and visa are ready.

Your obedient servant,
S. K.

Just between geniuses

By DON COSENTINO

HIGH RISK/HIGH GAIN, *by Alan Weiss. St. Martin's Press, New York City. 255 pages. $5.95.*

Accomplishing what many have threatened, Alan David Weiss has written a "freewheeling account" of his days (and nights) as a Peace Corps trainee. His novel, *High Risk/High Gain* may be intended as an exposé of the foibles of Peace Corps, but it seems more often a strongly worded valentine from one eccentric genius to another.

Weiss joined the Peace Corps in the summer of 1963, the helicon days of the test ban treaty, the jubilant march on Washington and the Kennedy-Khrushchev-Pope John triumvirate of peace. Invited to train for a Nigeria education program, Weiss shows up at Columbia Teachers College prepared to confront all the intellectual and physical rigors that the new frontier demands. What he actually experiences seems more often to be a benign version of *Catch 22*.

Under the paternal care of an omniscient university (each trainee has his exact subway fare tacked on to his weekly dole during practice teaching) flourishes a circus of well meaning absurdities: *Item:* Studies of the black-white crisis are conducted in a soundproof lecture hall while the actuality of Harlem seethes a few block away. *Item:* Every trainee is subjected to a little bit of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa, under the theory that if you can't be sure of using any one language, you might as well have a peek at all. *Item:* Area studies are invariably led by someone who says, "I've never been to Nigeria, but . . ." *Item:* Ghastly enumerations of tropical diseases are related to clean and healthy kids by clean and healthy doctors, none of whom can imagine the reality of disease in an immaculate study hall. When Weiss complains to one of his buddies that this is not the kind of stimulating confrontation he had imagined, he is advised, "Sure, it looks good in the brochures to say Peace Corps exposes you to all those fuzzies, but nobody expects you to learn nothing. Christ Almighty, if ya don't know that, ya don't know nothing."

Superimposed on this circus is the guillotine: Selection. Apparently dominating every trainee's secret thoughts, especially the bearded, sardonic narrator's, is the innocuous pink card instructing the Volunteer to see his Selection Officer. Therein lies the crisis of the book; will our hero beat "the system" or will the much feared nonword "deselected" send him packing in the night?

Beginning with the multi-phase personality test; "True or False: 'Evil spirits sometimes possess me,'" Weiss prepares for battle with Selection. The first fights come off well with the East European psychologist, "Haf you had any zexual difficulties?" but reach a climax with the Field Assessment Officer who tells Weiss that he's been classified "high risk/high gain," kind of guy who will either wind up on a magazine cover or at the center of an international incident. After a table pounding session with the Field Assessment Officer, Weiss walks out with an awareness that he is indeed a troublemaker. But in his own defense, and catching a corner of the truth, Weiss ponders, "And what was the Peace Corps, if not getting violently involved with your fellow man. He said unforgiveable things and you said unforgiveable things and it all came out in the wash, if the wedge of life had been driven deeply enough."

Weiss is amazed when, in spite of his beard and his bluntness, he is finally selected to go to Nigeria. Anxious readers, however, will have to wait for the next installment of the author's perils if they want to know what Africa is really like, for he mentions his overseas experience only in the last three paragraphs of the book.

For returned Volunteers, returned staff and other keepers of Peace Corps oral history, *High Risk/High Gain* should be pure delight. A thousand laughs from ten thousand bull sessions are personified in the chara

caricatures in the novel: Elsie, the seventy-year-old schoolteacher who turns out to play a wicked game of cricket; Cazler, the twenty-year-old socialist; "Roomy," the ornithologist with a penchant for voyeurism; "JZ," the blonde giant of a white girl who throws her arms around the wife of a Nigerian politician and suddenly humanizes a deadly reception line.

Present also are the stock villains from Volunteer folklore: first and foremost the ogres of Selection, but trailing not far behind the "liberals" who parade through the program from Washington, the returned and jaded Volunteers who smile knowingly at the trainees' naivety and the math instructor who loathes Weiss for knowing more than he does. There is more fun than venom in these personifications, the kind of fun that comes from booing the umpire and loving the game, the sheer visceral pleasure of throwing a bean bag at a bozo, knowing that it will rise again.

Love is not dead when the lover still cares enough to quarrel and Weiss is quarreling with the silliness and the play-it-safeness that marred (and mars) aspects of the Peace Corps. If the Peace Corps judges the Volunteer, he in turn weighs the organization. There is irony in the title of the novel: Weiss returns Selection's compliment by placing the Peace Corps in the high risk/high gain category. Both the author and the organization he describes prove to be eccentric and brilliant, petty and idealistic, with a large capacity for grandeur—and for mischief.

For reviewer Don Cosentino, reading Alan Weiss' book brought back memories of his own Peace Corps training at Columbia Teachers College. Cosentino, who was a Volunteer and staff member in Nigeria, is now Peace Corps operations officer for that country.

Future associate directors in training

Peace Corps Fellows

Reshaping their Volunteer experiences to fit staff molds has long been a task of returned Volunteers preparing to go back overseas as Peace Corps staff members. Last fall, the Peace Corps initiated a staff training program which attempts to help former Volunteers accomplish that task in a new way.

The Peace Corps Fellows Program is a kind of internship through which returned Volunteers, slated as future associate directors, are spending a year working in Washington headquarters before going overseas on 30-month assignments. The program recognizes the need for Volunteers-turned-staff to have perspective on their experiences and to have practice in staff situations.

There are 20 Fellows in this year's program, all men but two, representing 18 countries of Volunteer service. Most of them have already held three or four different jobs in the agency. The positions vary greatly, a variety meant to give the future overseas staffers a taste of all aspects of their future jobs. Generally, the year consists of four three-month assignments in different offices, one of which is always the Regional office of the country to which the Fellow will be ultimately assigned.

In the Regional offices, Fellows have assisted country operations officers to coordinate with the field the planning and documentation of new programs, including the selection and training requirements of the programs. Some have held operations officer positions.

From the Regions, program proposals go to the Office of Planning and Program Review and Research, where a number of Fellows have assisted regular program reviewers to examine program criteria, quality, numbers, feasibility, potential problems.

Some of the Fellows have been assigned to the Office of Volunteer Support; most of these in Special Services. There they have helped interview Volunteers terminating early and have assisted generally in Volunteer emergencies.

A number of Fellows have traveled to campuses around the U.S. on two and three-week recruiting stints. Some have assisted in training programs. A few have accompanied evaluators on their overseas trips and talked to Volunteers about their programs.

Generally, they have been free to move around the agency, to fill needed slots, to create jobs for themselves. For example, one Fellow who went recruiting in Puerto Rico decided to follow up on the task and moved over to Selection to work with the applications of those he helped recruit.

The Fellows Program is, says James Roan of the Fellows Committee, which acts as collective adviser to the program, "broad-based training in Washington which will give returned Volunteers a chance to digest their Volunteer experience and to prepare themselves to become associate directors."

The Fellows have accepted this purpose, and expanded it. As a group, they agree that preparing themselves to become staff members is their ultimate goal, but as individuals, they don't often agree on the best way to go about that preparation.

Closing the gap

For example, all claim that working in Washington is valuable in learning how things are done, where the power lies, what the procedures are. They agree that the Peace Corps' effectiveness has often been handicapped by a lack of understanding and communication between Washington and the field, and, as staff members, they feel they will be well prepared to help close this gap.

"Knowing Washington, I can better judge programs in the field," says one Fellow who worked in the program review office. "I know what goes and what doesn't, and why. I'll never think of Washington with an 'Oh!' before it again."

But difference in individual tech-

nique was brought out at a recent meeting of Fellows and the Fellows Committee. One Fellow was opting for staying put in one spot throughout the year in Washington.

"We are high on ideals and ideas," he said, "but as a first job, many of us need to get a lot of mileage this year out of assembling factors and making decisions based on those factors. For this reason, we need to stay in one place a while."

Most of the other Fellows, however, rejected this theory on the basis that "personality alignment" was not the best way to accomplish what they thought was most important: seeing power in action and developing work that is meaningful. The Fellows endorsed job rotation as the most effective means of "combining knowledge and fulfillment."

Most of the Fellows also rejected staying in one job because of the possible effects of "in-breeding." Said one Fellow, "To align oneself too closely with one Region, for example, is not the way to cut through bureaucratic regionalization, and, hopefully, we can become brave enough to cut through it."

Despite their endorsement of job rotation, the Fellows have concluded that some jobs available to them this year were not as meaningful in terms of staff preparation as other jobs, and they are in the process of spelling out these conclusions.

In evaluating their training to date, the Fellows outlined the role of an associate director, as they saw it, into these general categories: programming, Volunteer support, interpersonal relationships, administration and training. They concluded that in Washington one can receive good preparation in the areas of programming, administration and training; limited preparation in Volunteer support; and very limited practice in interpersonal relationships.

Their recommendations of which jobs prepare best will be considered when guidelines are set for next year's program.

Another conflict of goals facing the Fellows this year has been described by one as "Fellows impact vs. job responsibility."

Several staff officials in Washington have encouraged the Fellows to work collectively to make an impact upon the agency. To the Fellows "group impact" meant "group project," and they found themselves in endless discussions about what they might do and how they might go about it.

The Fellows tried a couple of projects. Some started to review country handbooks on rules and regulations governing Volunteers. Two others visited former Volunteers working on Capitol Hill, with an eye toward encouraging returning Volunteers to seek positions there as aides to congressmen. But neither of these projects was completed. Ultimately, the Fellows, as individuals, could not maintain enthusiasm about the idea of working as a group. As one described their feelings:

Job vs. group

"There was a nagging question: should we concentrate on the specific job we are engaged in or should we devote more time to the group? Is there a priority and who sets it? Some Fellows felt that their jobs were too time consuming for other work, and some felt a responsibility to their office and felt guilty about taking time away from their job when no one else in the office had this privilege. There was a feeling of not wanting to be treated specially."

"Job responsibility" prevailed, at the expense of any group project.

One decisive thing the Fellows have done as a group is to endorse the Fellows Program. After about eight months in training, they are, with a few exceptions, pleased with what they have been doing and, with no exceptions, pleased with what has been happening to themselves—as individuals—in the process.

"We are trying to draw the Peace Corps together as a whole," said one Fellow, explaining the program. "Each part is extremely important. Only when we understand them all can we say that the program has succeeded."

The program flexibility, which was hard for some to get used to at first (one Fellow arrived at his designated office to find that he was not expected nor was there a job ready), had the advantage, in some cases, of allowing independent job investigation and job change. The Fellows are anxious to retain that flexibility in the general part of the program. However, they do recommend stricter guidelines to insure future Fellows of worthwhile jobs in the agency and closer coordination with the Regional offices through which they ultimately are assigned overseas. In addition, some felt that it would be helpful to receive their ultimate country assignment earlier in the year, if not at the beginning. In this way, they argued, they could individually adapt all aspects of training toward that job. This year, most Fellows received their assignments in late spring. They will soon begin language training and other technical studies necessary for their particular jobs.

Senior staff officials in Washington have been generally pleased with the Fellows program, and with the Fellows.

Paul Sack, director of the Office of Planning and Program Review and Research, has worked with eight different Fellows in program review positions. He has been so impressed with them that he uses them as criteria when seeking new staff members.

"I interview a lot of returned overseas staff members for program review jobs here," says Sack, "and, after I've talked with them, I call the Regional office under which they served overseas and ask the people there about them. In order to get the kind of feedback I want on them, I say, 'Is John Doe who just got back from such-and-such as good as the Fellow who reviews programs in this Region?' The answer from the Region is usually, 'No, he's not that good, but he's experienced.'"

Six Fellows have worked in the Office of Selection, headed by Joe Farrell, who first proposed the idea of a Fellows Program and participated in the original planning.

"The Fellows we have had in Selection have certainly not been reluctant to be critical," says Farrell, "they have added a yeast to the whole operation. They combine freshness and maturity."

Farrell would like to see the program expanded in concept to include staff trainees such as returned VISTA leaders and young Foreign Service Officers, in addition to returned Peace Corps Volunteers. He feels the Peace Corps would benefit from introducing into the program someone who was not "raised in the Peace Corps." He would not, however, expand the size of the program. "The agency cannot give personal attention to many more than that at a time," he says.

Allen Rothenberg, director of Special Services in the Office of Volunteer Support, has supervised five Fellows during the course of the year. He feels the Fellows program is "a magnificent idea to provide young trained staff to the field." But he is critical of the program's administration in its present form.

"What the program needs above all," says Rothenberg, "is one responsible person to head it, to coordinate the committee that is now in operation and the advisers, to fight for the program so as to delay premature posting overseas or use of Fellows in ways to meet agency goals not consistent with training and their preparation for field assignment."

Next year's program

Rothenberg calls for tighter scheduling of jobs and systematic program evaluation in addition to more administrative leadership.

Margaret Conroy, director of the Office of Talent Search and chairman of the Fellows committee, recently announced that planning has begun for next year's Fellows program. The starting dates of the program will be staggered—September 1, November 1 and February 1—in order to coordinate with potential Fellows' dates of termination.

All country directors have been invited to nominate Volunteers whom they feel are qualified for the program. Nominees will then be interviewed by the Fellows Committee and must be approved by the Regional Director in whose region the individual will be assigned. Returned Volunteers working in Washington will also be considered for the program, which will be slightly expanded to include about 25 Fellows.

LETTERS TO THE VOLUNTEER

Support or surveillance?

To The Volunteer:

Mr. Coyne's article on the role of the staff in Peace Corps activities (February) comes at an interesting time for Volunteers in Malaysia. In West Malaysia, the Peace Corps has just completed its program of regionalization, where a country some 500 by 200 miles is divided into no less than four administrative regions. In addition to areas, each with its own area representative, Volunteers are further subdivided by job title, and a whole range of Contract Overseas Representative-type persons are available in the area of technical support.

Under this system a new division of staff responsibility has developed. Some staff members have a "disciplinarian" function, while others have a "nondisciplinarian" role. These terms, used by the staff members themselves, refer primarily to the staff who are on the look-out for Volunteers who violate Peace Corps Washington policy or who otherwise violate the pattern set by previous successful Volunteers. The violator in most cases is served with notice of one month of unsatisfactory service—a fine in reality.

While the total elimination of overseas staff might not be called for, as suggested by Mr. Coyne, the staff-Volunteer relationship and the meaning of support should be continuously examined in those countries which enjoy a large complement of staff.

Larry Kenoyer
James Smith

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

A breath of cool air

To The Volunteer:

John Coyne's article (February) calling for the abolition of overseas staff is a breath of cool air in the face of the steam heat of *in loco parentis* Peace Corps. It is very difficult, almost unnatural, for an image-conscious, ego-involved, family-type organization like the Peace Corps to avoid responding to the abuse of opportunity by new rules, to avoid responding to new demands for "proof" of effectiveness with new ways (and new people) of saying much the same American-brand ideas with added quantitative or behavioral validity. In fact, since the Peace Corps is not really so different from many public and private organizations that were designed or try to do the appropriately decent and altruistic thing at an appropriate time (yet who are also very involved with their *own* success), it is not surprising that it could not bring itself to putting its partisans so completely, and with such difficulty, in the host country. We must realize that the Peace Corps will remain institutionally in a direction of distance.

Fred Richardson

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The self-reliant PCV

To The Volunteer:

In response to John Coyne's perceptive article, "Reducing the staff role," I believe the involvement of host countries in Peace Corps policy should be increased. Establishing "self-reliance" is the major reason, and it is as much a problem for individuals as it is for the developing nations that strive so desperately to secure it. Peace Corps Volunteers who travel the road to individual self-reliance can better understand the many difficulties entailed when nations pursue this goal.

The responsibilities of Peace Corps Volunteers should coincide with the responsibilities of the officials in the nations where they serve. Volunteers must serve as competent leaders making rational decisions that are based upon scientific and practicable procedures and material. The time has come for a decided reduction in the role and size of the Peace Corps' administrative staff. In fact, the host country should have the greater au-

thority in determining recruitment of Volunteers and the staff that will train them as well as in deciding upon their placement.

The permanent in-country American staff should be replaced with an in-country "available ad-hoc staff" whose members are qualified persons throughout the country who have shown an interest in national development and who have submitted themselves for this in-country "staff." These nationals would be available to Peace Corps Volunteers for conference or discussion of their problems and they would be paid a small monthly sum as a gift. This procedure would seem to provide a wider range of indigenous personnel from which Volunteers could obtain relevant approaches to their tasks; it also encourages nationals to concentrate upon fulfilling personal and regional needs indirectly—through building a better nation.

Host countries can utilize Volunteers to facilitate nation-building in much better ways than Peace Corps Volunteers are presently used. This can be done if Volunteers are encouraged to become more self-reliant. Self-reliance can be strengthened if Volunteers do not have a readily available American staff which provides Americanized solutions and material. In a long run, Volunteers' self-reliance is not only an advantage for the developing nations in which Volunteers serve, but it affords a greater gain for the United States which still has quite a long way to go toward the development of equitable social institutions.

THOMASYNE LIGHTFOOTE-WILSON
Former Volunteer

Stanford, Calif.

Functions of staff

To THE VOLUNTEER:

The title of John Coyne's February article, "Reducing the staff role," was encouraging, but I found the contents a little disappointing. Staff does serve several useful functions: distributing living and leave allowances, giving occasionally good parties, and providing Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners. For these amenities, I am in favor of perpetuating the institution, although in a somewhat different role. I think that the relationship of staff to Volunteers should be more of a secretarial and less of an administrative one. However unsatisfactory the present system may be, I feel that Mr. Coyne's two suggested changes would be a large step in the wrong direction.

One of the advantages of putting an incompetent B.A. generalist in a development job (perhaps the only advantage) is that while he is coordinating his work with the local government, he can also be living and working on much the same level as the people he is trying to help. From this dual point of view, he can often synthesize a more personalized and accurate approach to the specific community in which he works than is found in regional and state-wide government schemes. Mr. Coyne is suggesting taking the Volunteer out of one bureaucracy and putting him into a much bigger and more confused one. I fail to see the value of this.

Reducing the size of staff is perhaps much less important than reducing the role and, if it is done, the place to start would be in Washington. Staff knows little enough already about both Volunteers and host countries without sitting behind desks in the United States. While there is undoubtedly room for improvement, centralizing and systematizing are not the answers. It might be a better idea to maintain just enough of Peace Corps Washington to take care of budgeting the programs and disperse the rest of the staff (very inconspicuously) throughout the countries in which Peace Corps is working, perhaps with the same living allowances and vehicle restrictions as Volunteers.

The situation now isn't a particularly bad one, and it is preferable to the one Mr. Coyne suggests. The Volunteer can determine to a large extent how much he will be involved with the host country bureaucracy, and with the help of a large waste basket he can very effectively ignore staff.

The Peace Corps *is* the Volunteer.

TIM FRITZ

Jawalgera, Mysore, India

For internationalizing

To THE VOLUNTEER:

I am in favor of Peace Corps being under the auspices of the United Nations. It has been said by leaders from underdeveloped countries that aid from international organizations is much more palatable than that from any one country, and that it is to the advantage of both countries to work through international organizations. If the Peace Corps is being suggested for the really right reasons, I do not see why the United States should object to such a change or withdraw its support. If it is not now being suggested for the right reasons (it is often said that it is a part of the State Department "package"), then it is best we find out now, for a lot of people are therefore being fooled. Why not remove any possibility for such accusations by becoming international?

I personally also find it repugnant and contradictory to be representing a country that spends so much more for war than it does for the Peace Corps, and would feel more confident in my position if I were connected with an international organization that I didn't feel was doing something contradictory to the Peace Corps idea.

We also might have much to learn by internationally exchanging ideas for programs and approaches.

HELEN THOMPSON

Cuenca, Ecuador

Democracy and the draft

To THE VOLUNTEER:

Andrew Berman in his letter to THE VOLUNTEER (February) stated that he has "yet to see a letter on the draft in THE VOLUNTEER that comes to grips with the two most significant issues." After reading his letter, I can see why he made such a statement. He, himself, is not aware of the basic issues.

Berman states, "The draft, by its very nature as an obligation, cannot be democratic. Compulsion and liberty don't mix." Perhaps he has yet to find out that there are indeed some obligations to being a citizen in a democracy.

I am hardly capable of giving a lesson on democratic institutions, but I have made some observations. The moment one commits a crime which robs someone of his property or life, the victim no longer possesses all the rights possible under a democracy. The rights granted to an individual in a democracy are of no value in themselves. A person must talk in order to exercise his right of free speech, he must earn money in order to own private property, he must actively worship God to profit from his religious freedom, and, at times, he must physically protect himself and

his democratic society from a threatening outside force.

All of these facts tend to support the argument for obligations being a part of the democratic way of life. The terms "democracy" and "obligation" are not contradictory; rather, they are complementary. Compulsion (i.e., obligation) and liberty do not mix. It is compulsion which allows a citizen the full benefits of living in a democracy.

Regardless of all the turmoil concerning Vietnam, the draft and the Peace Corps' position in relation to them, there are still obligations to living in a democracy, the biggest being the obligation to preserve or even improve the democratic institution for the next generation.

DAVID W. FRALEY

Meknes, Morocco

Peace Corps philosophy

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I came across the following excerpt from *Zorba the Greek* nearly two years ago while reading during one of those "blue evenings." The words seemed to stand out from the page as a perfect piece of Peace Corps philosophy.

"I remembered one morning when I discovered a cocoon in the bark of a tree, just as the butterfly was making a hole in its case and preparing to come out. I waited a while, but it was too long appearing and I was impatient. I bent over it and breathed on it to warm it. I warmed it as quickly as I could and the miracle began to happen before my eyes, faster than life. The case opened, the butterfly started slowly crawling out and I shall never forget my horror when I saw how its wings were folded back and crumpled; the wretched butterfly tried with its whole trembling body to unfold them. Bending over it, I tried to help it with my breath. In vain. It needed to be hatched out patiently and the unfolding of the wings should be a gradual process in the sun. Now it was too late. My breath had forced the butterfly to appear, all crumpled, before its time. It struggled desperately, and, a few seconds later, died in the palm of my hand.

"That little body is, I do believe, the greatest weight I have on my conscience. For I realize today that it is a mortal sin to violate the great laws of nature. We should not hurry,

Memorandum

TO : The field DATE: May, 1968
FROM : The editors
SUBJECT: 'This tired, old, rag-tag world'

As this May issue goes to press, the month of April is slightly more than one week old. It has been an incredible week, hopeful and desperate at once. The words of former Volunteer Nancy Marie Scheper, written upon her recent resignation as a Peace Corps recruiter, are timely ones. Miss Scheper worked in Selma, Alabama, before becoming a recruiter last September. Last month she returned to Selma to do social action work with the Southern Rural Research Project. Upon leaving the Peace Corps, she wrote: "I think I took this (recruiting) job, initially, out of a real need to tell people the story like it is. I wanted to bring our people, metaphorically, to the edge of the pit of stinking poverty, so that they might be able to sense for a moment the despair, the frustration, the moral and physical degradation in which so many of the world's populations are trapped. And, most of all, I hoped that in sensing it, they might be moved to passion and compassion. It's been quite a few months now, and whatever story I've had to tell, has been told, and told, and re-told again. Now I think it's time that I return to the field and do a little listening for a while. But I did want to say that I leave this job still believing that if anything is going to save this tired, old, rag-tag world from blowing itself up, it's going to be the smashing and tearing down of the cardboard walls and paper fences that one frightened man throws up against another, and behind which one terrified race hides from another, and over which nation destroys itself against nation. I doubt that there is any organization as 'liberal and passionate' and as well suited for the task of 'social iconoclast' as is Kennedy's Peace Corps."

As a social setting, Peace Corps headquarters can't compare with the pomp and glitter of foreign embassies in Washington, D. C. But that didn't faze staff members who work for the Africa Regional office on the ninth floor of the Peace Corps building. They proceeded with plans to fête embassy representatives of the 21 African countries where Peace Corps Volunteers work. The ninth floor was converted into a party room; buffet tables replaced Government Service Administration desks and file cabinets. The main office was cleared so that guests could dance to recorded African music. African art was everywhere. Down the hall was another buffet table, and in one office a Peace Corps staffer operated a continuous slide show of African landscapes and people. Guests were met downstairs in the lobby-turned-coatroom and escorted on and off express elevators by Peace Corps staffers. The purpose of the reception was, said C. Payne Lucas, regional director for Africa, to give Africans and Peace Corps staff members a chance to meet on an informal and social basis. Above, the Consular for Dahomey, Mr. Virgilé Octavé TeVoedjre, and his wife talk with Peace Corps co-hosts Jack Vaughn and Lucas.

we should not be impatient, but we should confidently obey the eternal rhythm."

I feel that these words are relevant to our work and interpretation of role and a soother for our impatient heritage. It would seem to me that Kazanzakis was speaking directly to the Peace Corps and the sentiment inherent in those lines is perhaps unspoken in all our minds.

JOSEPH A. LEACH

San Jose, Costa Rica

Award to Ashabranner

Brent K. Ashabranner, deputy director of the Peace Corps, was honored recently for distinguished public service in the federal government.

He is one of 10 winners of the annual Career Service Awards made by the National Civil Service League, a citizens' group organized to promote efficiency, economy and quality in government.

Ashabranner helped organize the first Peace Corps program in Nigeria in 1961. The next year he was named deputy director of the new Peace Corps program in India. He was deputy for two years, then director in 1965-66 of the 750 Volunteers in India, the largest Peace Corps program.

Early in 1966, he returned to Washington as director of Peace Corps training and was appointed acting deputy director of the agency on February 5, 1967.

Ashabranner was confirmed as deputy director by the Senate last September 13 and was sworn in by Vice President Hubert Humphrey on October 4, 1967.

Peace Corps Director Jack Vaughn said the award to Ashabranner "is a recognition of Brent's superior ability and dedication which have helped make the Peace Corps more effective each year."

Director Jack Vaughn sent the following telegram to Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 5:

"Those who have participated in your husband's noble dream are shamed and humiliated by last night's brutal and senseless act. But his courage and his ideals shall prevail upon history as they have inspired a new generation of men and women devoted to justice and peace. We of the Peace Corps are honored to have shared his vision for a world in which all men can live in dignity, equality and peace. I'm sure you will be sustained—as we all must try to be—by the faith that your husband's way was the right way, and that no matter how many men the powers of darkness kill, they can never kill a beautiful idea."

Contributions to King memorial fund invited

Past and present Volunteers and staff, along with all friends of the Peace Corps, have been invited to contribute to an education fund in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The perpetual fund is being established at Dr. King's alma mater, Morehouse College in Atlanta, by former Peace Corps Volunteers. It will be used for educational needs to be determined by the college.

Contributions should be made in dollars, by check or money order payable to the Martin Luther King Jr. Education Fund and sent to: Martin Luther King Jr. Education Fund, % Mr. Jerry Norris, 806 Connecticut Avenue, Room 720, Washington, D. C. 20006. A Peace Corps staff member in each host country has been appointed to handle contributions from Volunteers and to assist in converting host country currency transactions to U.S. currency.

Volunteers encouraged to prepare early for voting

With this Presidential election year in full swing, Peace Corps Voting Officer Penny White reminds Volunteers that in order to vote they must inform themselves in advance of the specific rules and regulations governing absentee voting in their individual states and counties.

Volunteers should pay special attention to the following procedures which are within their control and which have already been violated with enough frequency to make them problems.

Prospective voters should be sure they have the correct address of their local election board, including the county and the county seat, and they should be sure their ballots have proper certification, including the correct host country address.

To contact or receive materials from local election boards, Volunteers are advised to select either the air pouch or the international mailing system, using whichever they choose consistently. Volunteers selecting the latter should request their local election boards to send materials directly to their local in-country address via international air mail. While most election boards do honor such requests, they are not obligated by them. To use the air pouch, Volunteers should direct materials through their in-country Peace Corps office which will then pouch them via the State Department and the Peace Corps Washington Office of Volunteer Support to local election boards.

For general guidelines, Volunteers are referred to "How to vote in 68" in the January VOLUNTEER, and "Voting Information 1968," obtainable in host country Peace Corps offices.

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